

Introduction

It is an anachronism to say that forced migration is a global phenomenon and an important but sensitive policy agenda in the contemporary world. Although it has featured throughout mankind's history from the very beginning of civilization as we know it, forced migration has in recent decades come to the fore of international attention. That this may be because of the sheer volume of activity does not seem to be the case, as other centuries witnessed comparable or sometimes more significant migration flows. In the past, however, the world was not as institutionalised as it is now and not as divided into different clusters by political and physical barriers. At the same time it has never been easier to travel due to advances in technology. The division does not only have a geographical or cultural dimension, but rather and foremost an economic one. Disparities between the rich and the poor continue to grow and the number of people living in poverty has failed to diminish.

Poverty and disparities create tension, which is often exploited by political power centres to inflict violent conflicts, as potential migrants become more strongly motivated and desperate to abandon their dire economic conditions or unbearable political environment in search of a new and better place to live. Consequently, some flights are for economic reasons and some are politically motivated. Having fled, forced migrants also desire governmental protection and generous assistance as is the case in Western Europe, and for their children prospects for good education. The "paradise", however, is unable to accommodate everybody and it seems difficult to allocate the sparse space to a great number of those in need. Therefore the so called West had to develop certain responses in the form of policies and regulations towards migration flows, as it became an urgent issue not only for the international system but also for internal affairs, as migrants knocked on Western doors.

Refugee Crises and International Response: Towards Permanent Solutions? is a book about both the *ad hoc* and long-term reaction of the international community, mainly the Western international community, which possesses the necessary resources and instruments for sudden and less sudden migration movements in a world of dynamic changes in the international economic and political arena.

The first part entitled *Relief and Reconstruction* analyses international response to the humanitarian crises arising as a result of violent conflicts. Annabel Mwangi in her chapter brings us closer to the reality of the management of humanitarian assistance in Africa. She analyses the situation in the Kakuma camp situated in Northern Kenya. Lynette Basha investigates the role of international agencies in providing shelter and assisting in reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the frame of a relief – development continuum.

Relief and reconstruction are only some elements of the response of the international community. The second part, *Facilitating Repatriation: Problems with the Process of Return* is concerned with the obstacles met by forced migrants who go back home. Megan Bradley

describes the conditions of just return for returnees and analyses state responsibility and restitution rights. She also considers the obstacles and limits to the restitution process. Tania Ghanem tackles a different aspect of forced migrants who have returned home. She claims that completion of repatriation is the beginning of homelessness, as traumatised, changed people return to a new, changed environment.

Part three, *Immigration and Asylum*, discusses the long-term international response to refugee crises. Monica Zanchettin explains the impact of the September 11 tragedy on immigration and asylum policies in Canada and the United Kingdom. She highlights the securitisation of these policies in both countries and the increase in attempts to infringe upon human rights for the purpose of maintaining elusive security. Valeska Onken analyses the problems with temporary protection, an instrument widely used by European states as a replacement for ordinary asylum status. She underlines the social implications of such policies and the vacuum the people granted temporary protection find themselves in by not being able to fully integrate into the host society. Sarah-Jane Savage in her chapter show the UK's dispersal policy under the immigration act of 1999. She presents the legal regulations and the outcomes of the policy and she tries to decide whether such a policy is worth continuing and indeed whether it would be justifiable to do so.

Refugee Crises and International Response: Towards Permanent Solutions? is the fourth book in a series where the main theme is forced migration and the fourth project in which former students of the Master's degree course in Forced Migration at the Refugee Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House at the University of Oxford have participated.

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